

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TUNIS

UNCLAS STATE 038622

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BDIS, TS

SUBJ: LAMINEX/STIMIE CASE

1. COMMERCE TWICE DISCUSSED SHIPPING PROBLEM WITH CLARENCE LAPHAM, CHAIRMAN OF BOARD OF LAMINEX. LAPHAM FIRST CALLED COMMERCE/JENSEN FEBRUARY 14 FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF CABLE FROM STIMIE WHICH REFERRED TO FORTHCOMING COMMERCE MESSAGE. SINCE WE THEN HAD NO MESSAGE TO RELAY WE SIMPLY REVIEWED EARLIER NOVEMBER CONVERSATIONS WITH MRS. DURAN OF LAMINEX AND OFFERED FUTURE ASSISTANCE IF NEEDED.

2. FOLLOWING RECEIPT OF HAND-CARRIED EMBASSY DRAFT TELEGRAM FEBRUARY 18, COMMERCE AGAIN CONTACTED LAPHAM TO CLARIFY ISSUES. ACCORDING LAPHAM, STATUS OF SALE IS AS FOLLOWS:

A) GOODS ARE PACKED AND WAITING SHIPMENT PENDING RECEIPT OF AUTHENTICATED SHIPPING DOCUMENTS, WHICH LAPHAM SAYS IS NECESSARY. LAPHAM SAYS COMPANY POLICY IS TO SEND GOODS AND DOCUMENTS TOGETHER TO AVOID POTENTIAL PROBLEMS AT DESTINATION AND THAT HE HAS REQUESTED PRIORITITY HANDLING BY TUNISIAN EMBASSY AND FREIGHT HANDLER.

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B) LAPHAM ADMITS AND REGRETS DEPARTURE DELAYS WHICH HE

SAYS WERE CAUSED, FIRST, BY UNFORTUNATE CHOICE OF NEAR-BY LOS ANGELES AS EMBARKATION PORT, WHICH OFFERED TIMELY DEPARTURE BUT ONLY TO SOUSSE OR SFAX, WHICH WAS

UNACCEPTABLE TO STIMIE. SECONDLY, HOUSTON CHOSEN AS EMBARKATION PORT FOR TUNIS DESTINATION UPON ADVICE OF FREIGHT FORWARDER TO REDUCE DOMESTIC FREIGHT COSTS. HOWEVER, DEPARTURES TO TUNIS ARE FEW. SHIP SCHEDULED DEPART MARCH 17 AND ETA TUNIS THIRTY DAYS LATER, THUS ARRIVING WITHIN APRIL TIME FRAME REQUIRED BY STIMIE AND MINISTER INTERIOR.

C) ON FEBRUARY 14 LAPHAM CABLED STIMIE SUGGESTING REVISED SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS IN ORDER FACILITATE TIMELY ARRIVAL OF BOTH PLASTIC AND EQUIPMENT. HIS SUGGESTION IS TO SPLIT MACHINERY FROM OCEAN SHIPMENT AND SEND BY AIR WITH TWO OTHER SPECIFIED PARTIAL SHIPMENTS.

3. COMMERCE VERIFIED TUNISIAN EMBASSY RECEIPT OF LAMINEX DOCUMENTS AND REQUESTED THEIR PRIORITY HANDLING IN ORDER SATISFY LAMINEX/STIMIE.

4. ABOVE PROVIDED FOR YOUR BACKGROUND. TO EXTENT INFORMATION MAY CLARIFY NATURE OF U.S. EXPORTER'S PROBLEMS AND ASSIST UNDERSTANDING BY IMPORTER, POST MAY SHARE WITH STIMIE. KISSINGER

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